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Weekly Safety Tip

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May 2, 2016

SCI Safety News: The war against complacency: Don't be complacent about it

By: David Galt Senior Legal Editor

Source: <http://www.blr.com>

Date: April 11, 2016



As injury rates decrease, complacency increases. In turn, complacency leads to human errors that cause injuries. It's a paradox explained by Don Wilson, vice president of SafeStart Division of Electrolab Training Systems at his opening keynote presentation, *The War Against Complacency: Proven Strategies to Reduce Injuries and Human Factor Errors*, delivered during the BLR® Safety Summit this week in Austin, Texas.

Complacency is a significant factor that influences at-risk behavior at work and away from work.

At-risk behavior and causes of human error

There are three types of at-risk human behavior:

- Deliberate (e.g., excess speeding to be there on time)
- Unintentional (went through yellow light; couldn't stop in time)
- Habitual (always done it this way)

Wilson explained that from this list, most incidents are unintentional errors.

There are universal principles to be aware of when evaluating at-risk behavior. Basic patterns of behavior remain constant, so knowledge of hazards is not a common factor in injuries. Most workers know the hazards, but errors lead to incidents and increase the risk of injury because:

- The mind is not on the task.
- Employee is put in the “line of fire” (e.g., hit by forklift coming around a corner).
- Employee loses balance or traction or slips.

SCI Safety Slogan



James Lehrke-SCI

People make errors when they are in a state of:

- Rushing
- Frustration
- Fatigue
- Complacency (part of complacency includes fatigue when people are accustomed to being fatigued as a normal state)

For example, someone in a state of rushing won't have his or her mind completely on the task, which leads to high risk of error when performing a normally low-risk task.

Though knowledge of a hazard is constant, awareness of it decreases as a worker spends time with the hazard, and the worker is no longer preoccupied with the risk. It may take an incident or another stimulus to remind the worker of the risks. With this in mind, a case can be made that most injuries at work are caused by uncommon conditions that occur during an otherwise low-risk task. Complacency also leads people to think that hazards are all engineered out. The captain of the Titanic tossed caution to the wind because he knew that the ship contained many watertight compartments that would keep the ship afloat if some filled with water. Or not.

Fight complacency with emotional engagement (progressive discipline works, too)

How can a company motivate workers for safety to combat complacency?

Emotional engagement. There are a couple of effective ways to achieve engagement.

- Use messaging that applies at work as well as away from work. For example, Michelin's advertisement with a picture of a baby sitting next to a tire with the slogan, "There's a lot riding on your tires" creates a stimulating image of safety in the reader's mind.
- Arrange to have workers teach or convey safety messages to other workers. The most effective method of learning and retaining what is learned is one person teaching another.

Progressive discipline is another way to fight complacency. It provides the "outside stimulus" in cases where workers no longer think about the risks of unsafe behavior.

Don Wilson is part of the ownership group and vice president of the SafeStart safety training and consulting division of Electrolab Training Systems. He has over 25 years of experience in instructional design, vocational education, e-learning, industrial education, and health and safety training. Wilson is a frequent presenter at corporate health and safety meetings as well as at NSC, ASSE, and VPPPA conferences at both the national and local level. He has presented briefings on 24/7 safety to the leadership of all branches of the U.S. armed services at the Pentagon, and he has also taught classes at safety schools and organizations across North America and around the world.

SCI OSHA News: Pitfalls of Non-Compliance

Source: <http://www.blr.com> Part 2

Date: April 21, 2016

Worker hospitalized following trench cave-in

Plumbing and heating contractor

Pennsylvania OSHA Region 3

Willful and serious violations: In September 2015, OSHA began an inspection after being notified of a trench collapse by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. When inspectors arrived on-site, they found an employee of a plumbing and heating contractor was injured while working in an unprotected trench approximately 10 feet (ft) deep. The trench's sidewall collapsed, trapping and injuring the worker, who required hospitalization. OSHA cited the worker's employer with one willful and six serious violations. Citations included failing to keep excavated material at least 2 ft from the edge of the trench, failing to construct trenches in accordance with allowable slopes and configurations, failing to ensure that a competent person inspected the trench, and failing to maintain OSHA injury and illness records.

Penalty: \$41,200 fine

Retailer cited for fire hazards

Discount retail store

Mississippi OSHA Region 4

Repeat and serious violations: A discount retailer was cited with one serious and four repeat safety violations following an OSHA inspection. According to OSHA, the employer exposed workers at the facility to fire hazards by blocking emergency exits and fire extinguishers with merchandise and utility cards. In addition, the employer failed to perform annual inspections on fire extinguishers and did not keep the area around electrical outlets unobstructed. The company was previously cited for the same violations at two other stores in 2014, resulting in the repeat citations. The serious citation was issued for exposing employees to electrical hazards from missing faceplates on electrical outlets.

Penalty: \$107,620



Aurora Health Care®

Quick Tips for Healthy Living

Emergency Stress Stoppers

People experience stress in many different ways. While we can't avoid everything that triggers stress, we can manage our reactions and prevent a small problem from building into a bigger one.

- Call a "time out" or walk away. Stop whatever triggered the stress until you feel calmer.
- Walk! Exercise is the best natural tranquilizer there is.
- If you find yourself thinking a negative thought ("I can't do this"), try to replace it right away with a positive one ("I can learn to do this if I just take it one step at a time").
- Break up a big problem into smaller steps. Set small goals for each day to tackle the problem.
- Don't let others lay their stress on you. Listen to their problems- but don't feel that you have to solve them.
- Talk it out with someone you trust- a family member, friend, clergy member, or health care professional. These people are your built-in support system. The worst thing you can do is to keep all your stress inside. The people you know and trust can help you!

Amputation leads to fine

Nonprofit food processor

Texas OSHA Region 6

Serious violations: After an auger amputated an employee's hand at a nonprofit food processing facility, OSHA initiated an inspection and cited the employer with 12 serious violations. The violations included not having an emergency stop on equipment, allowing wet floors to create slip hazards, failing to create and implement a lockout/tagout program, operating unguarded machinery, and for permitting exit routes and electrical panels to be blocked.

Penalty: \$50,400 fine

Roofing workers lack fall protection

Roofing contractor

Texas OSHA Region 6

Repeat and serious violations: After witnessing three workers not using fall protection at a worksite, OSHA inspected the employer and cited the company with four repeat violations and one serious violation dealing with fall, ladder, and eye hazards. OSHA found that extension ladders were not used safely; employees were operating nail guns without eye protection; and employees were working at heights without guardrails, safety nets, or personal fall arrest systems. The company has been cited for the same or similar violations at different worksites five times since 2013.

Penalty: \$80,280 fine

Food manufacturer fined following evacuation

Food manufacturer

Louisiana OSHA Region 6

Serious violations: OSHA cited a food manufacturing company for 25 serious violations for exposing workers to hazardous chemicals, electrical dangers, and fall hazards. The inspection was initiated after an evacuation of the facility sent workers to the hospital as a precaution in October 2015. Many of the violations deal with OSHA's process safety management standard. Additional citations were issued for chemical exposure, respiratory protection violations, electrical hazards, and a lack of fall protection. "Worker safety and health must be an absolute priority for every employer," said Jason D. Coffey, OSHA's acting area director in Baton Rouge. "No worker should go to work not knowing which of the many hazards may injure them on any given day."

Penalty: \$124,000 fine

What do you think?
Send us an email
at:

*In Loving Memory... Jessica,
Kristin and Nick*



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